

Dramatic Dialogue-Debate

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Published by
THE ONTARIO PROHIBITION UNION
for the
Ontario Plebiscite Committee
Toronto - Canada
1924

NOTE

By design the matter contained herein is more than should properly be used in any evening. The reason for this is to permit localities to change, omit, or adapt to the local situation. It is better not to use it all at one time.

There has been very little attempt to put action into the dialogue, this being left to the initiative of those who take part. The one thing to be kept in mind is that all should be made as natural as possible. Let the style be thoroughly conversational. Never indulge in elocution or oratory. Above all don't let the actors sit still like dummies. Let them get up, walk around, put their hands in their pockets, talk back and forth, in the most free-and-easy way.

Don't recite. Read or appear to read all quotations—and from separate sheets of paper, or apparently from books or pamphlets.

B.H.S.

Dramatic Dialogue-Debate

CHARACTERS

Mr. A. A shrewd business man, well meaning, but almost wholly engrossed in commercial affairs.

Mr. B. An orthodox Temperance man, rather mild mannered, who has thoroughly studied the question and takes a serious view of it and of life in general.

Mr. C. A breezy, bustling, sporty, individual, who looks upon the practical side of everything.

EQUIPMENT

For **Mr. A.** A desk or table, chairs, if possible dummy telephone, piles of business looking papers.

For **Mr. B.** A portfolio, or satchel, full of papers or documents.

For **Mr. C.** A cane.

IMPORTANT

Make sure that the Chairman, or whoever is in charge of the programme, makes a statement before the dialogue begins to the effect that all the statistics, quotations, and references, are absolutely accurate in every particular and can be vouched for or proved by official documents.

Dramatic Dialogue-Debate

The proceedings open with Mr. A. sitting at his desk.

The telephone rings for Mr. A.

Mr. A. answers.

Mr. A.—The A—— Company
Yes

Mr. A. is speaking

Who did you say?.....

Very well, Mr. B., but I am very busy.

Well, come right over, but I hope you will make it snappy.

(Mr. B. appears accompanied by Mr. C.)

Mr. B.—Good morning Mr. A, let me make you acquainted with Mr. C, of the —— Company.

Mr. A. Good morning!

(Shakes hands, and remains standing, though chairs are provided for the visitors.)

Mr. B. We have come to see you Mr. A. in regard to this Prohibition Plebiscite. We know you are interested in all good things, and we want to be sure of your support now.

Mr. A. Well I generally try to do what I think is right. Are you men representing the "Dry" side?

Mr. B. Yes, we think that prohibition has been a benefit to Ontario and that it would be too bad to go back.

Mr. A. Well, I used to think that prohibition was a good thing, too, but lately things have not been going to suit me. There's an awful lot of bootlegging in the country.

Mr. B. But that is greatly exaggerated.

Mr. A. Well, every time I pick up the papers I see news of raids here and raids there; seizures in different parts of the Province.

Note.—Mr. C. begins almost everything he says with the ejaculation "Say!"

Mr. C. Say! Do you know what's news? It's the extraordinary.

Mr. A. What do you mean?

Mr. C. Well, if **you** were to get into a fight, or be caught stealing that would be news. The papers would headline it—but there's lots of fights and stealings they never mention. The very fact that the papers pay the attention they do to bootlegging is because it is the exceptional thing. It is news.

Mr. B. That is true. One old licensed bar or shop would sell more liquor in a week than a dozen bootleggers will sell in a year, and yet the selling by that bar or shop, in the old days, was not "News." The selling of a few bottles now is news.

Mr. A. Well I have about come to the conclusion that a lot of men are making a mint of money in bootlegging. The country is getting no profit from it. The people are being poisoned with bad liquor. Those who want liquor are getting it anyway. It might be better if we had some form of "Government Control" that would stop this law violation and at the same time give us a substantial revenue. It would, perhaps, help business, too. Goodness knows taxes are high enough now.

I hear that down in Quebec they are practically running their whole good-road's programme with money derived from liquor revenue. If we could get control of . . .

Mr. C. (Interrupting). We have control now. Prohibition is the only real control.

Mr. B. Of course it is not really the selling that hurts. It is drinking that causes the harm, and, if you permit the sale, you can't control the use. Surely, Mr. A., you are not going to take the booze side of this question.

Mr. A. No, No, No, Mr. B., No, No. I most emphatically am against liquor, but I am a practical business man, and I have my taxes to meet,

and here's a chance of raising revenue.

Mr. B. But Mr. A. you don't raise revenue from liquor, you only collect it. Revenue can only be raised out of wealth created or extracted. There is the product of the forest, mine, soil; or labor is applied to raw material, and its value enhanced. That added wealth is all that can pay revenue. The liquor traffic under any auspices adds nothing to the wealth of the community. Adam Smith said that. You cannot raise revenue from liquor, you can only collect it.

Mr. A. Well, they are collecting it down in Quebec.

Mr. B. How much do they collect?

Mr. A. I don't know, but it is up in the millions.

Mr. B. (Laughingly) I can tell you (opens up his portfolio and brings out some papers). The people of Quebec paid to the dispensaries in 1922 for liquor purchased, \$19,698,773 and for beer, purchased from license holders, \$27,527,255; a gross outlay of \$47,226,028. The gross revenue received from the sales of liquor was \$3,772,825, leaving a net loss of \$43,215,213.

Mr. C. (Who has been figuring on a paper). Say! That is, the Province of Quebec paid a commission, to the booze interests and others, of 1145 per cent. for the collection of this revenue—Whew! That's got the Home Bank financing beat a mile.

Mr. A. That certainly doesn't look like good business.

Mr. B. It isn't good business and the proof that it isn't is shown by the fact that there are by far more business failures in Quebec than in Ontario.

Mr. A. Is that so?

Mr. B. Here are the figures. (Again delves into his portfolio and brings out papers.). According to R. G. Dun & Company, during the past three years there have been in the Province of Quebec 3,319 business assignments, in the Province of Ontario, 2,172. But, even more important and significant, the excess of liabilities over assets during those three years was, in Quebec \$36,613,992, and in Ontario, \$16,088,997; and the worst showing of all in the Province of Quebec is for the years 1922 and 1923 when their liquor system was running in its full glory.

Mr. A. Well! They say there is an enormous amount of bootlegging in the country.

Mr. C. Say! That always makes me tired. "They say," "They say" is the biggest liar I ever heard. I wouldn't be surprised if my friend here could prove to you out of that satchel of his that there is not nearly as much liquor drunk as there used to be.

Mr. B. Yes, I could easily do that. (Again delves into his portfolio and brings out some papers.) Here are the government figures that show that the aggregate amount of liquor available for consumption in Canada in 1914, was 7,748,024 gallons and in 1923 was 2,691,531 gallons. That is to say—there was 5,056,493 gallons less liquor in Canada for use in 1923 than in 1914. When we consider that British Columbia and Quebec were legally selling during 1923, and estimate their consumption as being two-thirds as great per capita as in 1914, they alone would consume 2,039,167 gallons of liquor.

This would leave for consumption in the other seven provinces of Canada, with a combined population of 5,890,073, only 652,364 gallons, or .111 gallons per capita. This is only one-ninth as much as in 1914, and this is for all purposes, medicinal, bootlegging, rum-running and everything else.

Mr. C. (Gleefully) What did I tell you? People can't drink what there isn't. (Then turning to Mr. A.) Say! Half the lies you hear aren't true.

Mr. A. Is that all kinds of liquor?

Mr. B. No, that is just spirituous liquor. Regarding beer, the figures are even stronger. In 1914 there were 50 breweries in Ontario, in 1923, only 21. In 1914, beer manufactured was 24,193,619 gallons, in 1923, 6,379,667 gallons, and included in this is all beer for export and all near-beer sold in the Province. There is probably not 5 per cent. as much intoxicating beer consumed in Ontario to-day as formerly when under license.

Mr. A. (Sort of stammering). If . . . a . . . if . . . the people aren't drinking so much liquor we ought to be getting good results; in some directions anyway.

Mr. B. That's just what we are getting. (Dives into his portfolio again and brings out some more papers, reads; goes over them rapidly.) Here's the official report of the

Ontario Board of License Commissioners. They sent a questionnaire to the manufacturers. Ten hundred and forty-seven, or 70 per cent. said the Ontario Temperance Act, makes for increased production of goods; 1094 or 76 per cent. said it increased the workers' regularity of attendance immediately after pay day; 1165, or 82 per cent. said it resulted in more comfortable homes and better supplies of food and clothing for wives and children.

In reply to a questionnaire sent to the doctors of the Province, 438 or 87 per cent. said, that in their opinion the Ontario Temperance Act has been beneficial to the health of the community.

From the report of the Registrar-General of the Province of Ontario here I find that the deaths from tuberculosis, per one hundred thousand of the population has gone down from 92.2 to 66.4.

Taking the largest three cities of Ontario—Toronto, Ottawa, and Hamilton, the number of cases of drunkenness and disorderly conduct decreased from 19,860 in 1914 to 6,342 in 1923.

Mr. C. (Interrupting). Say! How much more have you got there?

Mr. A. Our friend certainly seems to be well posted, but I notice he hasn't said much about the business side of the question.

Mr. B. Well, I have some facts regarding business.

Here is one (reaches into his portfolio for another paper). In 1913 the total amount of chattel mortgages on record undischarged was \$40,928,404. In 1920, \$13,582,555.

Not only do the people owe less, but they have more (reaches in his portfolio for another paper).

The total amount of Dominion Government bonds payable in Canada outstanding before prohibition, and now, was:—

1914	\$ 302,842,485
1924	1,896,323,087

An increase of \$1,593,480,602.

(Continuing and speaking as he looks for papers in his portfolio.)

In this connection, Hon. P. C. Larkin (looking up): You know Larkin, of Salada Tea, Dominion High Commissioner in England, stated in London: "I am sure that we are saving—through prohibition—by direct and indirect means, the interest on our public debt." (Continuing), (dives into his portfolio again):

Another evidence of prosperity and, by the way, of popular enjoyment, is revealed in this fact, from a Government report, that in 1916 the total number of motor cars registered in Ontario was 53,944; in 1923 274,427.

Mr. C. (Interrupting). Say! I heard a good one the other day. A fellow met me on the street and we were talking about the number of motor accidents caused by drink. There was an inquest being held. A little kiddy ran across the road with arms outstretched to meet her daddy coming home. A reckless driver came dashing by and the father carried into the house the dead body of his only child. The evidence showed, as usual, that the man had been drinking. I said to my friend: "booze and gasoline are certainly a dangerous mixture." He said, "they sure are. We've got the booze corralled now, but if we let down the bars, we'd better scrap our cars." I think that was a good way of putting it "If we let down the bars we'd better scrap our cars."

Mr. A. I agree with you there. I saw myself that Henry Ford the other day said: "If the United States of America ever repeals prohibition, in the interests of public safety, there should be enacted the next day a law prohibiting the use of gasoline vehicles upon the public highways."

Mr. C. (Turning to Mr. B.) Say! keep right on with that line of evidence you're handing out. We'll land this gentleman yet (pointing to Mr. A.).

Mr. A. Well now, let's get down to hard facts, I saw it stated the other day that crime was increasing in the Province of Ontario. Indeed, there were Government Statistics given in proof of this. I don't just remember them.

Mr. B. I can give them to you. Here they are. (Dives into his portfolio again, brings out the paper, reads from it.) From the Dominion Criminal Statistics I find that in the year 1914 the total convictions for all offences in Ontario were 65,806; in 1923, they were 72,787 an increase of 6,981.

Mr. A. (Triumphantly). Yes, those are the figures I saw. Now, if the Ontario Temperance Act is such a success how is it that crime is increasing? Answer me that.

Mr. B. That is very easily answered, Mr. A. We have just to analyze these convictions to find out what particular crimes increased and what decreased. I have it here, taken from another page of the report. (Turns over some pages.) Let us compare 1914 with 1922. In each case the first figures I give you will be for 1914, the last for 1922. These are for offences which are usually associated with the drinking of liquor.

	1914	1922
Assaults	1,627	756
Cruelty to animals .	1,172	256
Trespass	1,982	789
Vagrancy	4,703	1,507
Keeping and frequenting bawdy houses	802	352
Loose, idle and disorderly	6,411	1,736
Drunkenness	17,703	10,063
Total	34,400	15,459
A decrease of		18,941

Mr. A. The figures you gave a moment ago showed an increase, you are now trying to make out there is a decrease.

Mr. B. No, Mr. A. you interrupted before I was through. There is an increase in offences relating to highways, due to the enormous increase of motor vehicle traffic. Convictions in 1914 were 4,717; in 1922, 32,099, an increase of 27,387.

Mr. C. Ha, Ha, Ha. Say! I thought you'd have an answer for him, but (turning with a semi-serious face to Mr. A.) prohibition is really to blame for that, isn't it? I know many a man who is owning and driving a motor car to-day that would never have smelled gasoline of his own, if it had not been for prohibition.

Mr. A. (Tapping the desk). Well, I guess you are right at that. I know some men myself whom I see driving around in cars that did not have very much between them and the poor-house in the old days. But, (frowning) this Ontario Temperance Act does not seem to me to be fair. Well-to-do people, such as you and I, can have our cellars full, but the workman is deprived of his beer. I don't think we should have one law for the rich man and another for the poor man.

Mr. B. Did you read what Ramsay MacDonald said the other day along that line Mr. A?

Mr. A. No, what did he say?

Mr. B. (Diving into his bag again brings out some more papers). Some one wrote to him apparently saying: We appeal to you as a Labor Member, to prevent this sort of class legislation, which is going to keep for the rich man his drink and deprive the poor man of his.

Here was his reply: "It is a specious argument; what does it mean? It is an appeal to the rights of the Democracy. . . We must differentiate the rights that are of good report from the rights that are of evil report, and we say: Do not cling for five minutes to a right that is of no value. If the rich want to keep the road open to their own loss, that is their affair. No; democracy ought not to say, 'Because one class has such a right, all classes ought to claim the same right.' It is not worth it. Let us see to it that the rights the democracy claims, that the rights the working-classes claim, are rights worth having, and not rights that come with disease and cancer and vice in their train. . . The right to go wrong, to go down, to go astray—well, we will make a present of these rights to any one who wants them."

Mr. C. Say! That's good horse sense.

Mr. A. Yes, perhaps, but I understand that the great majority of the Labor Members of the British Parliament are prohibitionists. In fact I saw that the Glasgow Labor Party—Fancy, the Glasgow Labor Party—had declared almost unanimously for prohibition. Ramsay MacDonald is likely a prohibitionist; he surely is an extremist. Now I am not an extremist.

Please don't think that I am a drinking man. I never drink, but I mind my own business, and let every other fellow mind his. It seems to me that the Ontario Temperance Act is a sort of a meddlesome measure. If a man wants a drink, why should he not be able to get it without having to go to a bootlegger for it?

Mr. C. Say! That's no argument. If a man wants opium, or cocaine, or any other drug, why not let him have it? If a man wants to carry pistols, and a bowie knife, why not let him do it? If a man wants to spit on the sidewalk, why not permit him? Why, gracious man, if everybody did just as he liked we would have a fine time, wouldn't we?

Mr. B. (Diving into his bag) Prof. Irving Fisher, of Yale University,

answered that argument, I think, very nicely. He says: (reading) "Alcoholic prohibition is in the same class as opium prohibition. If liberty to be illiterate, to endanger workmen's lives, to build darkroom tenements, and to narcotize oneself be liberty in form, it is certainly not liberty in substance. Naturally, every law to promote human liberty must be, in form, restrictive. The test of actual experience shows that in prohibition territory, the feeling that personal liberty is hampered tends to disappear, and in its place comes a very real sense of society being liberated from slavery to alcohol, and from the thralldom of drunkenness, crime, vice, delinquency, disease, inefficiency, degeneracy, destitution and political corruption."

Mr. C. Say! (Turning to Mr. A.) What do you think of that?

Mr. A. (Somewhat nettled). You misunderstand me. I am not an advocate of booze. I am as good a temperance man as you gentlemen are, but I believe in moderation. The trouble with men like you is you are extremists (Getting gradually a little warm.) You can't take a reasonable view of the question. You are always abusing any one that does not agree with you. You come in here and try to browbeat me and—

Mr. C. Say! Hold on. Stop right there. (raising his cane threateningly) I may be that kind of a man, but my friend, Mr. B. here isn't. He is handing you a line of good, solid argument in a gentlemanly, reasonable way, but it does not seem to have made much of an impression on you. I know I am a bit of a roughneck, but when I see a man hemming and hawing, and squirming and wiggling the way you have been doing, over this, that and the other thing, it gets my goat. Why don't you face this thing, for he is right. He sure is.

Mr. A. (Impatiently). Well, I've spent all the time I can on this. I have my work to finish.

Mr. B. (Gently and deferentially). We have our work to attend to also, but I consider that citizenship is a somewhat important piece of business.

Mr. A. You are not going to start and preach at me now, are you?

Mr. B. No I'm not preaching at you. In fact my one purpose is to get your vote for prohibition, for I give you credit for being honest in the

matter. You have a high reputation in the community for integrity and business wisdom. I want to show you that prohibition has been a good thing in every way for our province and that other systems have failed in other provinces. Do you know Mr. A. what is one of the difficulties of the present situation?

Mr. A. No, what is it?

Mr. B. It is this. We have not had an open bar in any part of the province of Ontario for eight years, and even before that, many places were dry by local option. Has it occurred to you Mr. A. that there is not a young man or woman twenty-nine years of age in the province of Ontario, who has legally seen the inside of an open bar or liquor shop, and do you know that number comprises fully twenty per cent. of our entire voting strength in this province? They do not know the infamy of the liquor traffic. Or, put it another way—every boy and girl who was thirteen years of age when prohibition came into force is to-day a voter.

Mr. A. (Rising). Now gentlemen, this thing is going just a little far. I am perfectly willing to listen to what you have to say, but I don't propose to waste my whole morning. I have other things to attend to, and so far as I am concerned, this interview is over. (Turns to papers on his desk).

Mr. C. (Advances towards the desk). Say! Look here, perhaps I did get a bit hot just now, I am not quite satisfied to have this meeting break up like this. Let me ask you this: Have you been in Montreal recently?

Mr. A. No.

Mr. C. Well, I was, just the other day, and I made it my business to look around. That's what settled this thing for me, Mr. A. Why, say, man, you see more drunkenness in Montreal in one evening than you will see in Toronto in a year, and conditions there are simply rotten in almost every way.

Mr. A. They are making money.

Mr. C. Who's making money?

Mr. A. The people in Montreal.

Mr. C. Say! Did you ever hear of a man drinking himself rich?

Mr. A. Well, hardly.

Mr. C. I guess not, nor a community either.

Mr. B. But some folks in Quebec are getting rich. For instance,

(Reaches down into his bag, brings out more papers), I notice that the National Brewery stock which was selling for \$20.00 for \$100.00 share in 1918, jumped to 199 in 1919, then in 1920 they quartered the shares, and by to-day's paper (looking at the paper) it is quoted at 101, an increase of about 1500 per cent. The brewers are making money.

Mr. A. But down in Quebec and in British Columbia, and these other provinces, they all have had prohibition and have repealed it.

Mr. C. Say! Hold on there. Quebec never had prohibition.

Mr. A. Didn't it?

Mr. B. No. Quebec partially passed a prohibitory law, but it never came into force.

Mr. A. Well, these Provinces have all Government Control now.

Mr. C. Say! That term "Government Control" makes me tired. The system in these provinces that they call "government control" is not control at all. It's permission, allowance. Calling it "control," reminds me of a story I heard the other day. A boy went home to his father with a very sober face and said, Dad, how many legs would a dog have if you called his tail a leg? The father answered, five, my son. No, Dad, the son said, laughingly pointing his finger at his father, no he wouldn't. He would only have four, because calling his tail a leg wouldn't make it a leg. Would it?

We call this system "government control" and then get the idea that it controls.

Mr. B. Mr. C. is quite right. Control is a misnomer. The only real control is prohibition.

Mr. A. But is it not true that there are actually more convictions for drunkenness in the Province of Ontario than there are in the Province of Quebec? I saw the figures somewhere.

Mr. B. Yes, I have them here. (Dives into his portfolio and brings out the papers.) In 1922 the convictions for drunkenness in the Province of Quebec were 7,913; in Ontario, 10,063.

Mr. A. There, I told you.

Mr. B. But that proves nothing.

Mr. A. Proves nothing? Figures can't lie.

Mr. B. No, but they can be made to tell us some mighty queer stories.

To rightly understand this difference all the facts must be taken into account—legal standards, policy regarding prosecutions; police efficiency, etc.

For example, this same report shows that convictions for profanation of the Lord's Day were, in Quebec, 15; in Ontario, 646; yet Quebec has its Sunday picture shows, games and amusements of all sorts. Again there were in 1922, 15 boys convicted in Ontario for nude bathing; none in Quebec.

Mr. C. Say! That doesn't mean either that all Quebec boys wear bathing suits when they go in swimming. (Laughs.)

Mr. B. Taking it again. Convictions for offences relating to highways in Quebec were 3,344, in Ontario 31,813. This is simply indicative of prosecution policy and police efficiency.

Mr. A. Do you mean to say that the police of Quebec are not as efficient as they are in Ontario?

Mr. B. The figures speak for themselves, Mr. A. For instance, take Montreal and Toronto. In 1922 there were 708 autos stolen in Montreal and 506 recovered by the police; in Toronto 973 autos stolen and 952 recovered by the police.

Mr. A. (Who had been putting the figures on a pad). You mean to tell me that in Toronto the police recovered all but 21 cars that were stolen and that in Montreal there were 202 that they couldn't get back?

Mr. B. That's exactly what I mean. Or, take it again, there were in Montreal 1,457 burglaries reported to the police in 1922; in Toronto 568. But in Montreal there were only 119 burglars convicted; Toronto 250.

Mr. C. Say! If I go into the burglary line, I'll move to Montreal.

Mr. A. That means that while there were nearly three times as many burglaries in Montreal there were twice as many convictions in Toronto.

Mr. B. Exactly. And the figures you saw and that I quoted regarding drunkenness are for convictions, not cases.

Mr. A. I see your point.

Mr. B. There's another fact to be considered. In license days the policy of the Toronto police was that when a man was arrested for drunkenness

he would be reprimanded and allowed to go; when arrested a second time he would be brought before the magistrate and unless the case was a flagrant one, would again be reprimanded. Only when the same man was arrested the third time was there a conviction recorded. For instance, in the year 1915 there were 11,232 arrests for drunkenness in the City of Toronto, but in the whole county of York, there were only 3,157 convictions for drunkenness. To-day a new and more stringent policy is in force in Toronto and practically every arrest is a conviction. In Montreal the old policy is still pursued.

Mr. A. Well that certainly sets a fellow thinking, but look here. How do you account for this. (Turns over a lot of papers on his table). I saw an advertisement in one of our daily papers the other day. (Finds the paper.) Here it is. (Continues.) This says that the Province of Ontario is losing millions of dollars every year because of prohibition. Now that interests me as a business man. Here are the exact words (reads): "More millions, if not in profits at least in sales, are being lost by our manufacturers, wholesalers and jobbers because of the increasing tendency of buyers, not merely from the West, but from Ontario itself, to favor Montreal!"

Mr. B. If that statement be true, then business should be bigger and better in Montreal than in Toronto?

Mr. A. Certainly! Isn't it?

Mr. B. One fact answers that. (Dives into his portfolio.) There is no better index to the volume of trade, that is, business turnover, than that shown by bank clearings. Comparing Toronto with Montreal we find that they were:

(Repeats the following figures very rapidly, running them together. Meanwhile Mr. A. and Mr. C. look more and more bewildered):

In Montreal in 1920....\$7,109,189,038
In Toronto in 1920..... 5,410,214,802
In Montreal in 1923.... 5,493,105,775
In Toronto in 1923..... 5,591,568,205

Don't you see? You surely have been able to keep these little figures in your mind.

Mr. C. (Laughing). Say! What do you take us for?

Mr. A. To me they're clear as mud at midnight.

Mr. B. Well, they show that in these three years under government control in Montreal, bank clearings decreased by \$1,616,083,263, while in Toronto under prohibition they increased by \$181,353,403.

Mr. C. Say! Boy, oh Boy! We can stand a whole lot of that, eh! Mr. A.?

Mr. A. But the Moderation League in this advertisement also complains that (reads): "Still more millions are being lost to our hotels and restaurants, retail stores, theatres, garages, oil stations, etc., by the throngs of automobile tourists from across the border—free spenders all of them—whom we don't get, but whom we might get! And the feeding of them, while here, would be a welcome addition to the market of our farmers."

Mr. B. (Gently). I'm afraid that this shows that our old friends Ananias and Saphira did not die childless, for the government records show that the number of automobiles admitted from U.S.A. for touring purposes during the year 1922, the last for which figures are available, was: Quebec, 62,951; Ontario, 882,926.

Mr. C. Say! Maybe figures can't lie, but liars sure can figure.

Mr. A. But isn't it a fact that the Province of Quebec is far better off than Ontario. I saw somewhere that Ontario had liabilities of over one hundred million dollars more than Quebec.

Mr. B. (Taking some papers from his portfolio.) It is true that Ontario has liabilities of \$204,000,000 as compared with Quebec's \$58,000,000, that is \$146,000,000 more, but it is also true that Ontario has assets of \$213,000,000, as compared with Quebec's \$14,000,000, which means that in Ontario there is a surplus on capital account of \$8,000,000; in Quebec a deficit of \$43,000,000.

Mr. C. Say! Isn't a half truth the worst kind of a lie?

Mr. B. Let me go on—Expenditure for educational purposes in Quebec is only 75 cents per capita, in Ontario \$2.32.

Montreal spent for health and sanitation \$1.52 per capita, while Toronto spent \$6.44.

On civic recreation Montreal spent 32 cents per capita, as against \$2.39 in Toronto.

Fifty-five per cent. of the citizens of Toronto own the houses they live in, in Montreal only five per cent.

Mr. A. (Shoving his chair back). Do you gentlemen really tell me that all this unrest in the country, that all this talk about law violation, is simply nonsense?

Mr. C. Say! I was down to Carleton Place the other day, stayed at the Mississippi Hotel. Got stuck there over Sunday. Sunday morning I was sitting around the hotel and there was a gang of fellows in the smoking room or writing room. (Turning to Mr. A.) You know the kind that gather around a place like that?

Mr. A. (Nodding). Yes.

Mr. C. Well, they had their feet up on the table, with their cigars, pipes and cigarettes going, spittoons handy. They were settling all the affairs of church and state to their own satisfaction, then they came to the Ontario Temperance Act. Say! It was funny. You know those fellows—some of them were for church union, some were opposed, some believed in one immigration policy, some in another. But, when it came to the Ontario Temperance Act they were absolutely unanimous. It was the most iniquitous piece of legislation ever framed. Say! It was funny. There was more liquor sold than ever. Right in that town there were all kinds of booze joints. Every Greek restaurant, every Chinese chop suey place was selling it. The place was simply reeking with booze, according to their account. Then, worst of all, boys and girls were getting it that never drank before. Why, say! They almost cried over those poor boys and girls. But, being all agreed, they couldn't argue, and so there was silence for a time. Then one poor disconsolate voice piped up. I won't repeat all that he said, but it meant something like this: Why, blankety, blankety, blank it all, they charge such a blankety blank price for the blank stuff, nobody can buy it—and the blinking idiot didn't recognize that that one statement smashed to smithereens all the rest of their talk about there being more liquor sold than ever.

Mr. A. Well, of course, the best answer to that would be the figures Mr. B. gave us about the aggregate amount of liquor consumed in Canada.

Mr. C. Hello! Say; (Advancing to Mr. A. and holding out his hand.) You're actually arguing our way.

Mr. A. No, I'm not, but some of the things these fellows get off, and call arguments, made me tired. But if a man wants a drink should he not be able to get it without having to go to a bootlegger for it?

Mr. C. Say! According to that, you would make it the business of the government to supply every fellow that wanted booze, with it. Thus by getting it from the Government he wouldn't have to go to the bootlegger.

Mr. B. That's just the theory that they go on in British Columbia. Let me read you from the *Daily Province of Vancouver*, issue of November 4, 1922, reporting an address by Attorney-General Manson:

"He claimed that keeping the liquor stores open on Wednesday afternoon was in the interests of good government and that thousands of dollars had been taken out of the bootlegger's profits as a result."

Mr. A. But the system we are going to have in Ontario—

Mr. C. (Interrupting). Say! Cut that out. We are going to continue the Ontario Temperance Act in Ontario, and we're going to have a bigger majority than ever.

Mr. A. Well, I'm not going to say what we are going to have in Ontario. I don't know. I never bet on horse races or elections.

Mr. C. Well, I'm telling you.

Mr. B. Go on Mr. A. with what you were going to say when Mr. C. interrupted you.

Mr. A. I was going to say that Prime Minister Ferguson has told us very plainly in his statement that a majority for government control does not mean a system such as they had in British Columbia or Quebec. Apparently he does not think much of those systems, and, from what you say, I don't think much of them either. But, if we adopt government control in Ontario, it will be really a model system, for we can profit by the mistakes that these other provinces have made.

Mr. C. Say! Get this in your noddle, and get it straight, that the evil and harm does not lie in the system under which booze is sold, nor in the style of package in which it is put up, but in the stuff itself. Booze is bad. Scrubbing a pig will never take the love of mud out of its heart;

putting a frock coat or government uniform on the outlawed booze business won't make it respectable or anything else but the booze business.

Mr. B. (Taking out more papers). May I be permitted to call your attention to the fact that Premier Oliver (honest John Oliver they call him in British Columbia) who is a total abstainer and a prohibitionist, started out with the very same good intentions. In a manifesto to the electors December 1st, 1920, he said: (Reads).

"The Government does not interpret the result of the poll as an instruction authorizing the return of the bar or the drinking saloon, but rather as an instruction to make available for use both spirituous and malt liquors in reasonable quantities and at a reasonable price, subject to restrictions that will prevent abuses."

Mr. C. Say! I've heard of a road that is paved with good intentions and that's the road the booze business is on. May it have a speedy end to its journey.

Mr. A. I have heard that they have a better system in British Columbia than in Quebec. Liquor is not sold so freely there. A man has to get a permit, or something before he can buy, I believe.

Mr. C. Say! I can tell you something about British Columbia. On my last trip West I happened to meet Hon. H. H. Stevens on the train. Do you know Harry Stevens?

Mr. A. No.

Mr. C. He is member of the Dominion Parliament for Vancouver, knows the country there like a book, fine fellow, and say, he sure did have some story about British Columbia booze. He told me of one case that he knew of where a woman—you know the permits they have in British Columbia aren't very big, and they endorse all purchases on the back of them—this permit, Stevens said, was all pasted up with coupons like a railroad ticket.

It showed the amount of liquor obtained in one week on this particular permit to have been:

August

9	5 doz. beer, 2 bottles rum
10	5 doz. beer, 2 bottles Scotch
11	5 doz. beer, 2 bottles rum
12	5 doz. beer, 2 bottles Scotch
13	5 doz. beer, 2 bottles rum
15	5 doz. beer, 2 bottles rum
16	5 doz. beer, 1 bottle Scotch

On this one permit in sixty-eight days this woman was furnished, for her own use, mark you, with:

13 bottles of Scotch whiskey.

70 bottles rum.

1960 bottles beer.

Mr. A. (With disgust). And they call that "Government Control."

Mr. B. Diving into his portfolio. I have here the official report of the British Columbia Liquor Commission.

For the six months ending March 31, 1923, the sales of the Government stores amounted to \$5,029,-376, which was an increase of \$884,219.23 over the corresponding period twelve months before. This means a drink bill of over \$10,000,000 a year, or over \$19 per capita. In 1911 the per capita expenditure for all Canada, was only \$11.30.

Mr. A. (Humorously to Mr. B.). Is there anythin' you don't know?

Mr. B. (Deprecatingly). Oh, yes! But you will be interested (reaching into his portfolio) that there was a resolution passed recently by the Retail Merchant's Association of Vancouver (reads):

Whereas the business of the retail grocers is suffering very heavily from the diversion of money into liquor channels, which should be spent legitimately to supply foods and other necessities and comforts for the people; and Whereas, merchants in other lines are similarly affected by the heavy and wasteful expenditure for liquor. Therefore, be it resolved that this section recommend to the Provincial Executive that this resolution be circulated among the various branches of the province to ascertain if they are in favor of the Retail Merchant's Association requesting the Government to take a plebiscite, at an early date, on the prohibition of the sale and importation of liquor in the province."

And more, (continuing) I have another resolution (reaches into his portfolio again) passed unanimously at a Convention of British Columbia Municipalities at Prince Rupert. I will not read it all, but this is a part: (Reads).

"That the present situation is worse than in the days of the open bar and is not only destructive

to the morals of the people, but is resulting in bringing about general contempt for law and order; that the government be urged at the earliest possible moment to consider this situation and enact laws to alter this deplorable state of affairs."

Mr. A. You fellows have me pretty well cornered up, I must admit. Now just tell me frankly, what about Manitoba? Didn't they profit by the experience of British Columbia and Quebec, and enact a really model system of Government Control.

Mr. B. Yes, that is exactly what they did. Premier Bracken, a strong temperance man, wanted to give the people the law they voted for, and yet sought to make it so rigid and strict as to absolutely prevent any abuses. And I believe they have about as good a law as can be devised. At least that is what those in charge of it think.

Mr. A. Yes, so I believe. Now that is the kind of law we would probably get in Ontario. And wouldn't that be better after all?

Mr. C. Say! I know something about Manitoba, too. I was telling you I went up with Stevens, well, he went on through to the Coast—I got off at Winnipeg—went to the Marlborough Hotel—as I registered, I noticed some folders in a holder on the counter—picked one of them out. What do you suppose it was?

Mr. A. I don't know,—Some theatre programme?

Mr. C. Not on your life. It was a price list issued by the Liquor Commission of Manitoba, giving description and prices of the 661 varieties of brandy, gin, rum, beer, wine, whiskey, etc., that they sell; and, on the back, in a place left for it, a cut of the Marlborough Hotel, and also a list of the agencies where liquor might be obtained. And then, most significant of all, stamped across the front of it in red ink: "For information see the Porter." Say! There is Government Control, for you. Fancy, "Government Control."

Mr. A. Well, what did the Porter tell you? I suppose you went to him.

Mr. C. I surely did, and he told me there were two kinds of permits, permanent and temporary; that the only place where a man could keep liquor was in his permanent or temporary residence. But I told him I had neither permanent nor temporary

residence. "Oh, yes, you have," he said, "You are a temporary resident in this hotel."

Mr. A. (Breaking in). Did he mean that you could have liquor in your room in this hotel?

Mr. C. Sure thing! That is exactly what he meant, but he said I could only get one case a week of any one kind and there are only 661 varieties. Say, fancy, a case a week, and a choice like that.

Mr. A. And do you mean to tell me that any man who is just passing through Manitoba can get a temporary permit and purchase liquor in that quantity, and have it in his hotel room and drink it and give to anybody he likes?

Mr. B. Absolutely. That's the law, and the results are just what you might expect, for I have here (looks in his portfolio), a report from the Chief of Police of the City of Winnipeg, which shows that the arrests for drunk and disorderliness had increased in five months from 424 to 616, an increase of 45 per cent.

Mr. C. Say! That just proves what I heard a fellow say the other day, "When liquor is sold it can't be controlled."

Mr. B. Of course it can't. There's another feature of the situation in Manitoba. Let me read you a press despatch reporting a decision recently given in the Manitoba Courts. It brings out a serious phase of the whole question of Government sale. (Reads):

Winnipeg, June 17.—No offence is committed when liquor is legally purchased through the Manitoba Liquor Commission for export purposes to the United States, even though at the time of seizure it is found in a place contrary to the provisions of the Manitoba Temperance Act. This was the ruling of Judge Cory in County Court, Monday, when a conviction obtained against P. J. Chapman, of St. Paul, Minn., last March, was quashed, a \$200. fine returned to him, and an order given for the return of \$2,000 worth of liquor which had been confiscated.

Mr. A. Now let me get this clear. Does this ruling mean that there is no need for an underground system to obtain liquor by rum-runners taking it into the United States? That

it can be purchased openly, and provided it is a bona fide transaction, and the purchaser can show it was bought for export purposes, he cannot be touched under the Manitoba Temperance Act?

Mr. B. That's exactly what this decision means. It is far-reaching in its effect. Liquor for export can be kept in any quantity, in any place in the Province, and booze is the leakiest leakable liquor that ever leaked. It must be kept in mind that facilitating rum-running also facilitates bootlegging. Both can flourish, in unparalleled opportunity, under such systems as those of Manitoba, British Columbia and Quebec.

Mr. C. Say! That itself would make bootlegging and rum-running far, far worse in Ontario.

Mr. B. Undoubtedly. Now, the only places where these gentry can get their supplies are the distilleries and breweries, or by smuggling liquor in from Quebec. But you can see how utterly impossible the situation would be if the Government were to establish depots of supply throughout the Province, and liquor could be stored practically anywhere.

Mr. A. I suppose it would complicate an already bad situation.

Mr. B. Have you a family Mr. A.?

Mr. A. Two boys and a girl.

Mr. C. What ages?

Mr. A. The eldest fourteen, the youngest eight.

Mr. B. Are they going to school?

Mr. A. Yes, the eldest is just in the high school.

Mr. B. I suppose you like your children?

Mr. A. Like them? Why man, those kiddies of mine are the finest ever. Just the day before yesterday, Ted, that's my youngest boy said to me, Dad . . .

Mr. C. (Interrupting). Say! Don't get started on the smartness of your kids, because my girl Betty is just about the loveliest, cheeriest bunch of sweetness that ever happened.

Mr. B. Now gentlemen, I did not intend to start a "boost-your-baby" contest, but to bring out some facts about the relation of the Ontario Temperance Act to children.

Mr. A. Relation of the Ontario Temperance Act to children? Why? What have children to do with the

Ontario Temperance Act? That law is for men that get drunk, not for children.

Mr. B. Yes, it is. Indeed it is a primarily a law for the benefit of children. You and I don't matter. It is those who come after us, and who bear our names, that count. They are everything.

Mr. A. I agree absolutely. I'd lay down my life gladly for those youngsters of mine, but how in the world does the Ontario Temperance Act affect them?

Mr. B. In many ways.

Do you know (taking paper from his portfolio) that the two last years before prohibition, 1914-1915 there were 2,981 infants died under twelve months of age; in the last two years 1922-1923, 1,957? Nearly a thousand less in two years.

Mr. A. But what has prohibition to do with that? Aren't our improved health regulations, greater knowledge of sanitary conditions, and baby clinics responsible in the main?

Mr. B. I'm not saying prohibition is responsible for all, but it is a tremendous factor, because you have in a degree eliminated from the blood of the parents the racial poison of alcohol. Then there are improved home conditions brought about by prohibition.

Mr. A. I believe you're right.

Mr. B. (Very seriously). It is my considered judgment that, in the Province of Ontario this very day, there are hundreds, yes thousands, of mothers who have their babes on their knees that would be mourning them but for prohibition.

Mr. A. (Very seriously). I tell you an argument like that gets a fellow's very heartstrings, doesn't it?

Mr. C. (Very seriously). Say! If I were a preacher I would preach every other Sunday on the rights of children and our duty to childhood. You know they're going to take our places. Carry on. Do the things we leave undone, because we are too lazy or incompetent to do them, or did not have the courage to tackle the job.

Mr. A. I agree absolutely. Fitting the coming generation for citizenship is the greatest duty of our lives. In fact it is all that really matters. But, what I can't see yet is, what the Sam Hill the Ontario Temperance Act has to do with that?

Mr. B. Let me show you. In the year 1914 the total registration at the primary schools in the City of Toronto was 78,897; in 1923 103,871, or per thousands of the population, 168 in 1914; and in 1923, 193. The average attendance in the year 1914 was 102 for every thousand of the population and in 1923 was 143.

Mr. A. Do you mean that attendance has increased more than registration has?

Mr. B. Yes, aggregate registration increased by 32 per cent.; attendance increased by 61 per cent. Or, in proportion to the population, registration increased 15 per cent. and attendance 40 per cent.

Mr. A. (Thoughtfully). That's significant.

Mr. B. It surely is and it means that the homes of Toronto have been immeasurably blessed by prohibition. This is reflected in the children from those homes, who, better nurtured, better fed, better clad, happier, healthier, are not only being sent to school in larger numbers, but are attending more regularly.

Mr. C. Say! I heard a good one along that line. A prominent Toronto shoe dealer writing to the "Shoe and Leather Journal" regarding prohibition said: "Trade in children's shoes on the first Saturday following the enforcement of the Act was larger than on the Saturday before Christmas, which is considered the best day for trade in children's shoes in the year."

Mr. A. That is significant.

Mr. B. But there is another aspect to this which I want you to notice. You take a given number in a class of scholars. The larger the average attendance the better the results from the entire class.

Mr. A. Yes, I know, absenteeism not only prevents the absentees themselves from going ahead, but holds back the scholar who attends.

Mr. B. Exactly. Now the percentage of attendance to registration for 1914 in the Toronto schools was 61; in 1923, 76.

Mr. A. (Interestedly). Well, now! I never thought of that.

Mr. B. But that's not all. The figures regarding secondary education are even more striking. The children have not been compelled to leave school so soon, but have gone on to collegiate, technical schools and

schools of commerce, so that the combined attendance in these secondary schools has increased 153 per cent.

Here are the actual figures. Attendance has increased from 7,869 to 22,910. That is, from 17 per thousand of the population to 43.

Mr. A. Those figures are simply amazing.

Mr. B. They are, and, when you put all these figures together, they are really tremendous. The gross attendance at all Toronto schools has increased from 55,120 to 99,802, or, per thousand of the population, from 118 to 185.

Mr. A. That is marvellous. And yet when I come to think of it I know home after home where the children get far more attention now than they did.

Mr. B. The effect of all this upon higher citizenship and better conditions of life is incalculable. Prohibition means better men and women, physically, mentally, morally.

Mr. A. It surely does.

Mr. B. (facetiously). Of course, there are drawbacks to this situation. The increased attendance has brought about almost a crisis in the educational affairs of the city. School taxes have enormously increased; the attendance has entirely outrun the accommodation available, so that in some schools the children have to attend in relays.

Mr. C. Say! A man who would grumble about that expenditure ought to be ashamed of himself. In my opinion no better, nor more far-reaching results are obtained from any expenditure of public money than from that which goes into our schools.

Mr. A. Is there a similar situation throughout the province or is Toronto exceptional?

Mr. B. (Reaching into his portfolio again.) A questionnaire was sent out by the government to the school inspectors of the province, and to some of the principals, inquiring along that line. Here are some of the questions and their answers. (Reads):

Has it improved the home surroundings of the children? 158 or 94 per cent. answered "Yes" and 10, or 5 per cent., answered "No."

Has it improved their opportunities for obtaining an educa-

tion? 159, or 95 per cent., answered "Yes" and 10, or 5 per cent, answered "No."

Mr. A. That would seem to strengthen your deductions from the figures you have given.

Mr. B. Yes! and here's another significant fact.

Coincident with the increased attendance at our public schools there has been an increased use at our public libraries by the boys and girls of the city. This is shown in the following figures, which show the increase in the number of books issued to juveniles for home reading and reference purposes, during the last nine years:

Year.	Home Reading.	Ref Books
1914	187,188	113,330
1923	548,704	716,608

Mr. A. Well, let me tell you gentlemen frankly now, after what you've said, that, if I was perfectly sure that this would mean real prohibition, I'd vote for it, but here we have in the Province of Ontario six distilleries and twenty-nine breweries manufacturing booze and we are trying, by the O.T.A. to stop it from reaching the people. I believe that as long as the stuff is made people will get it. We ought to stop manufacturing, nothing less than that is any good.

Mr. C. You are about right at that. Booze sure is leaky stuff but because we can't get all the prohibition we want that is no reason for not taking all we can get.

Mr. B. In my judgment that very issue is involved in the present vote. If we vote to sustain and strengthen the Ontario Temperance Act it will be a step toward national prohibition; but, if the Ontario Temperance Act is repealed we have not only put beyond our own reach but beyond the reach of any province in Canada the help that would come from such a national law.

Mr. C. Say! Wasn't there a big world prohibition convention held in Toronto not long ago.

Mr. B. There was and it was attended by representatives of sixty-six nations. They adopted a resolution. I have a copy of it, (reads):

1. We, members of the great human family, deeply and tenderly sympathize with all, in every nation, who are suffering from the ravages of alcoholic

liquors. We have watched with thankfulness the progress of the world-wide campaign against alcoholism. We rejoice with them that do rejoice in the first fruits of victory and wish God-speed to those who are now fighting for the same end on any field. We call upon all, men and women of good-will to unite in common action against this common foe, and pledge ourselves and those whom we represent, to this high task, until by the blessing of Almighty God this age-long curse shall be no more.

Mr. A. Do you know I believe that the result of the vote in Ontario on October 23rd is going to be mighty far-reaching in its effect.

Mr. B. It will. We have it within our power to materially help or hinder a great reform movement throughout the world.

Mr. C. Say! After all gentlemen, what is there in this booze business or in the booze arguments. I'm going to send the Moderation League a model slogan. Here it is "Bring Back Booze." "Bring Back Booze." "Bring Back Booze." That's all they are after, they're just a "bring back booze" bunch. But say! Do you remember the old bar room and liquor shops, with their disgusting sights, sounds and smells?

Mr. B. Yes, and the staggering, cursing, drunken, men and women who used to jostle us on the streets and in the street cars, particularly if there was any public demonstration?

Mr. A. Yes, and the poor, battered, bedraggled hulks of humanity that were continually begging us for a handout?

Mr. B. I always felt sorry for those poor wrecks for I could always see in them, though often badly defaced, the image of our common Father. They were to me brother men to whom I was bound by ties of our common humanity.

Mr. C. Yes! And don't you remember the wrecked homes and blighted lives because of drink.

Mr. B. Yes, and the vice and crime and drunkenness and destitution.

Mr. A. We must never under any circumstances permit the old condition again.

Mr. C. Well, say! There is no doubt as to which is the booze side of this ballot anyway, and I for one, never want to be on the booze side of any question.

Mr. B. Nor me.

Mr. A. (Emphatically). Nor me.

Mr. C. (Turning to Mr. A.). Say! I'm glad to hear you say that. Shake on it.

Mr. B. And I also am very glad indeed Mr. A. to have this assurance of your support. (Shakes hands).

Mr. A. Well, I'm glad I pronounced myself, and I must confess right now that I felt mighty uncomfortable about the whole business. I want to thank you gentlemen most heartily for putting this right before me, and for getting me to put myself right upon the question. By the way, have you anyone else to see?

Mr. B. Yes! We have three or four other gentlemen to call on.

Mr. A. I know a man in the office just next door; he's swithering, let's go and tackle him. (All start for the door talking together).

Mr. A. By the way I have a nice little Studebaker sedan that perhaps you could use on election day. My wife is a peach of a driver and I know it would suit her to the ground to be busy that day driving voters. She is a red hot dry.

Mr. C. Say! How would you like to have that wife of yours driving for the "Bring Back Booze" Brigade. If you were for them, why should not she be also?

Mr. A. That's right, isn't it? And I was actually thinking of voting with a crowd that I would not want my wife to associate with.

(All go out talking, the last words heard being):

Mr. C. Say! Let's pitch in and make it 500,000 this time.

OLD ONTARIO'S PROUD RECORD

The following table shows the Province-wide votes that have been taken upon the prohibition issue in Ontario. Always has there been a substantial majority. The heart of Ontario is sound upon the Prohibition issue.

Voted Upon	Date of Voting	Aggregate Vote	Dry Vote	Wet Vote	Dry Majority	P.C. Dry	P.C. Wet
Provincial Plebiscite	1894	303,209	192,489	110,720	81,769	63.48	36.52
Dominion Plebiscite	1898	269,782	154,498	115,284	39,214	57.27	42.73
Provincial Referendum	1902	303,297	199,749	103,548	96,201	65.86	34.14
Repeal of the O.T.A.	1919	1,147,785	777,537	370,248	407,289	67.74	32.26
Prohibition of Importation	1921	912,238	539,556	372,682	166,874	59.15	40.85
Measure Prohibition Plebiscite	1924—MAKE IT 500,000.						